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Schweiker Asks Curb on Snooping

By THOMAS M. HRITZ
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

"Big Brother snooping" by the federal government's intelligence apparatus must be neutralized by appropriate legislation before it becomes an American way of life, Sen. Richard S. Schweiker said here yesterday.

Schweiker, R-Montgomery, a member of a Senate Select Committee investigating the activities of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), said the technological snooping capabilities of the CIA, the FBI and other related agencies have become so sophisticated that present laws can't deal with them.

"Big Brother snooping has been carried out to almost the Nth degree," said Schweiker at a mid-morning news conference. "Our own equipment could be used against us and 1984 could be here today."

SCHWEIKER SAID Congress can cope with the situation by enacting new legislation and not "hiding behind the phrase 'national security.'"

He said he became skeptical about the activities of the nation's intelligence apparatus overnight when he learned about a CIA effort to pay mobsters $100,000 to assassinate Fidel Castro.

Since then, he added, what he has learned frightens him.

The Senate committee has virtually reopened the investigation of the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy and the ensuing Warren Commission report.

He said the Warren Commission didn't know what questions to ask in connection with the assassination and all of its ramifications. "But we know the right questions now," he added.

He said he believes there are people in the FBI and the CIA who know the truth about what happened and that an effort must be made to make them testify under oath.

Schweiker said that although his committee is still in "the documentation stage," there is evidence of at least three cover-ups in connection with the Kennedy assassination.

One, he said, is several covert attempts by the CIA to kill Castro. "The President's death could very well have been political retaliation," said Schweiker.

Another, he said, is the strange behavior of Lee Harvey Oswald shortly after he was arrested on suspicion of murdering Kennedy.

"He was allowed one telephone call," recalled Schweiker. "He did not call his lawyer and he did not call his wife. He called the FBI. That is the antithesis of what someone in those circumstances would do."

AND THE THIRD, he said, is a 1960 memo from the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover indicating that someone was using Oswald's credentials and possibly acting as his double.

Schweiker stopped short of calling the assassination and subsequent investigation a conspiracy, but he said he was not discounting the possibility of such a conspiracy.

He praised Coroner Cyril Wecht for emphasizing the discrepancies in two autopsies performed on Kennedy's body — the first at a Dallas hospital and the second at Bethesda Naval Hospital.

"I am not an assassination buff as he is," said Schweiker, "but Wecht has done an excellent job in pursuing this."

Schweiker also said he believes Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott will run for a fourth term next year. He added that he believes Scott would defeat Rep. H. John Heinz III, R-Fox Chapel, should Heinz enter the primary.

The 75-year-old Scott is expected to announce his intentions at a Dec. 4 Republican fund-raiser here.